

Amendments to the Claims:

Examiner withdrew claims 20, 21, 43, 53 and 54 from further consideration. All pending claims are reproduced below, including those that remain unchanged.

Claims 1 – 14 (Canceled)

1 15. (Previously Presented) A holder usable to create a continuous loop formed by matingly interlocking adjacent such holders, the holder comprising:

first and second walls retained a spaced-apart distance from each other by a base and adapted to admit at least a portion of at least one object to be retained by said holder;

a first holder-engaging mechanism extending out from said base with a slot located adjacent thereto; and

2 a second holder-engaging mechanism extending out from said base having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot; and

3 wherein said first holder-engaging mechanism on said holder is disposed to matingly interlock with a second holder-engaging mechanism on a second said holder, and said second holder-engaging mechanism on said holder is disposed to matingly interlock with a first holder-engaging mechanism on a third said holder to form said loop; and

4 wherein the distal end of the second holder-engaging mechanism of the second said holder can pass through said slot located adjacent to the first holder-engaging mechanism of said holder to which the second holder-engaging mechanism is inserted to allow the second said holder to spread apart from said holder.

5 16. (Previously Presented) The holder of claim 15, further including at least one projecting member

located on at least one of said first and second walls to retain said object.

3 17. (Original) The holder of claim 1⁵, wherein said holder is integrally formed as a single piece of material.

4 18. (Original) The holder of claim 1⁵, wherein said holder comprises injection-molded plastic.

5 19. (Original) The holder of claim 1⁵, wherein said object is a compact disk jewel case.

6 20. (Withdrawn) The holder of claim 1⁵, wherein said holder is sized to retain two objects such that both objects are aligned in the same horizontal plane.

7 21. (Withdrawn) The holder of claim 20⁶, further including:
a rib member to bifurcate an object retaining space between said first and second walls.

22. (Cancelled)

8 23. (Original) The holder of claim 1⁵, wherein at least one of said first holder engaging mechanism and said second engaging mechanism projects outwardly from said holder.

Claims 24 – 36 (Canceled)

9 37. (Previously Presented) A holder adapted to matingly interlock with adjacent such holders to create a continuous loop of said holders, the holder comprising:

a base having an inward and outward surface, said inward surface having a male coupling mechanism and a female coupling mechanism, said male and female coupling mechanisms extending inwardly from said inward surface;

first and second members spaced-apart from each other a distance and adapted to admit at least a portion of an object, and said first and second member extending outwardly from said outward surface; and

said male and female coupling mechanism matingly interlock adjacent holders to each other to form a continuous loop; and

said male coupling mechanism having a slot located adjacent thereto;

said female coupling mechanism having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot;

wherein the distal end of female coupling mechanism of an adjacent holder can pass through said slot located adjacent to said male coupling mechanism of said holder to which the female coupling mechanism is inserted to allow the adjacent holder to spread apart from said holder.

10 38. (Original) The holder of claim 37⁹, wherein said holder is injection molded plastic.

11 39. (Original) The holder of claim 37⁹, wherein said first and second members are spaced-apart from each other approximately 5".

¹² 40. (Original) The holder of claim ⁹ 37, wherein said first and second members are spaced-apart from each other a distance approximating at least a top-to-bottom thickness of a CD jewel case to be retained by said holder.

¹³ 41. (Previously Presented) The holder of claim ⁹ 37, wherein said male coupling mechanism includes a first curved projecting member sized and disposed to matingly interlock with a second region on an adjacent said holder, and the female coupling mechanism includes a second region sized and disposed to matingly interlock with a first curved projecting member on an adjacent said holder.

¹⁴ 42. (Previously Presented) The holder of claim ⁹ 37, further including at least one L-shaped interlock member formed on the inward surface of said holder.

¹⁵ 43. (Withdrawn) The holder of claim ⁹ 37, wherein said holder is sized to retain two objects in a side-by-side configuration.

¹⁶ 44. (Original) The holder of claim ⁹ 37, wherein one of said members includes a projection disposed to aid in retaining a CD jewel case retained by said holder.

¹⁷ 45. (Original) The holder of claim ⁹ 37, wherein one of said members includes at least one projection disposed to frictionally retain a ridge-shaped lip on a CD jewel case retained by said holder.

46. - 49. (Cancelled)

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50: (Previously Presented) A holder to retain a compact disc jewel-case, the holder adapted to interlock with similar holders to form a continuous loop, each holder comprising:

a base section adapted to be located adjacent a first edge of the jewel-case, having a male coupling mechanism and a female coupling mechanism, said female coupling mechanism having an inner surface and an outer surface;

a first finger extending from the base section and adapted to be positioned adjacent to a second edge of the jewel-case;

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a second finger extending from the base section and adapted to be positioned adjacent to a third edge of the jewel-case; and

wherein said inner surface of said female coupling mechanism of said holder interlocks with a male coupling mechanism of an adjacent holder so that said base section of the holders form the continuous loop, and further where said outer surface of said female coupling mechanism is shaped and adapted to be seated in a groove between adjacent teeth on a sprocket, promoting the jewel-case to fan-out at a turnaround region;

said male coupling mechanism extending from said base with a slot located through said base and adjacent to said male coupling mechanism;

said female coupling mechanism extending from said base having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot of an adjacent holder; and

wherein the distal end of the female coupling mechanism can pass through said slot located adjacent to said male holder-engaging mechanism of an adjacent holder to which the female coupling mechanism is inserted to allow the holder and the another holder to spread apart in relation to each other/

51. (Cancelled)

¹⁹52. (Previously Presented) A holder to retain a compact disc, the holder adapted to interlock with similar holders to form a continuous loop, each holder comprising:

a base, having a male coupling mechanism and a female coupling mechanism, said female coupling mechanism having an inner surface and an outer surface, said base adapted to retain the compact disc;

said inner surface of said female coupling mechanism interlocks with said male coupling mechanism of an adjacent holder so that said base section of the holders form the continuous loop, and said outer surface of said female coupling mechanism is shaped and adapted to be seated in a groove between adjacent teeth on a sprocket, promoting the housing to fan-out at a turnaround region;

said male coupling mechanism extending from said base, with a slot located through said base and adjacent to said male coupling mechanism;

said female coupling mechanism extending from said base having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot of an adjacent holder; and

wherein the distal end of the female coupling mechanism can pass through said slot located adjacent to said male holder-engaging mechanism of an adjacent holder to which the female coupling mechanism is inserted to allow the holder and the another holder to spread apart in relation to each other.

¹⁹20 53. (Withdrawn) The holder as recited in claim ¹⁹52, wherein the base further has a slotted space that can store promotional printed material.

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21 54. (Withdrawn) The holder as recited in claim 52, wherein the base further has felt wiper to wipe dust from the compact disc.

22 55. (Previously Presented) A holder to retain an object, the holder adapted to interlock with similar holders to form a continuous loop, each holder comprising:

a base, having a male coupling mechanism and a female coupling mechanism, said female coupling mechanism having an inner and outer surface;

a support structure extending from the base, having a retaining mechanism to frictionally retain the object; and

said inner surface of said female coupling mechanism interlocks with a male coupling mechanism of an adjacent holder so that said base of the holders form a continuous loop, the male coupling mechanism nesting within the female coupling mechanism, and said outer surface of said female coupling mechanism is shaped and adapted to be seated in a groove between adjacent teeth on a sprocket; and

said male coupling mechanism extending from said base with a slot located through said base and adjacent to said male coupling mechanism;

said female coupling mechanism extending from said base having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot of an adjacent holder; and

wherein the distal end of the female coupling mechanism can pass through said slot located adjacent to said male holder-engaging mechanism of an adjacent holder to which the female coupling mechanism is inserted to allow the holder and the another holder to spread apart in relation to each other.

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56. (Previously Presented) A holder to retain an object, the holder adapted to interlock with similar

holders to form a continuous loop, each holder comprising:

a base having an outwardly facing surface and an inwardly facing surface having a male coupling mechanism and a female coupling mechanism, said female coupling mechanism having a rounded inner surface and a rounded outer surface;

a support structure extending from the outwardly facing surface of said base, having a retaining mechanism adapted to frictionally retain the object; and

said rounded inner surface of said female coupling mechanism interlocks with a male coupling mechanism of an adjacent holder so that said bases of the holders form a continuous loop, and further where said rounded outer surface of said female coupling mechanism is shaped and adapted to be seated in a groove between adjacent teeth on a sprocket; and

said male coupling mechanism extending from said base with a slot located through said base and adjacent to said male coupling mechanism;

said female coupling mechanism extending from said base having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot of an adjacent holder; and

wherein the distal end of the female coupling mechanism can pass through said slot located adjacent to said male holder-engaging mechanism of an adjacent holder to which the female coupling mechanism is inserted to allow the holder and the another holder to spread apart in relation to each other.

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57. (Previously Presented) A holder to retain an object, the holder adapted to interlock with similar holders to form a continuous loop, each holder comprising:

a base having an outward surface adapted to be adjacent an edge of the object and an inward surface having a male coupling mechanism and a female coupling mechanism, said female coupling

mechanism having a rounded inner surface and a rounded outer surface;

a first and second finger extending from the base, each finger adapted to be positioned adjacent to an edge of the object;

wherein the rounded inner surface of the female coupling mechanism of said holder is adapted to interlock with a male coupling mechanism of an adjacent holder to form a flexible hinge, the male coupling mechanism nesting within the female coupling mechanism, and said rounded outer surface of the female coupling mechanism is shaped and adapted to nest within a groove between adjacent teeth of a sprocket;

said male coupling mechanism extending from said base with a slot located through said base and adjacent to said male coupling mechanism;

said female coupling mechanism extending from said base having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot of an adjacent holder; and

wherein the distal end of the female coupling mechanism can pass through said slot located adjacent to said male holder-engaging mechanism of an adjacent holder to which the female coupling mechanism is inserted to allow the holder and the another holder to spread apart in relation to each other.

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58. (Previously Presented) A holder to retain an object, the holder adapted to interlock with similar holders to form a continuous loop, each holder comprising:

a base with an inwardly facing surface and an outwardly facing surface;

a structure adapted to retain the object extending outwardly from the outward facing surface;

a male coupling mechanism and a female coupling mechanism, said male and female coupling mechanisms extending inwardly from the inward facing surface, with the female coupling mechanism having an inner surface and a rounded outer surface;

wherein said inner surface of said female coupling mechanism of said holder is adapted to interlock with a male coupling mechanism of an adjacent holder to form a flexible hinge, the male coupling mechanism nesting with the female coupling mechanism, and the rounded outer surface of the female coupling mechanism is shaped and adapted to nest within a groove between adjacent teeth of a sprocket; and

said male coupling mechanism extending from said base with a slot located through said base and adjacent to said male coupling mechanism;

said female coupling mechanism extending from said base having a distal end, which distal end is shaped in order to be received in said slot of an adjacent holder; and

wherein the distal end of the female coupling mechanism can pass through said slot located adjacent to said male holder-engaging mechanism of an adjacent holder to which the female coupling mechanism is inserted to allow the holder and the another holder to spread apart in relation to each other.